

# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

## The Vine and Its Branches

John 15:1-8



AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

"Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.

"Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.

"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from Me ye can do nothing.

"If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be My disciples."







"IF YE WILL INQUIRE, INQUIRE YE."

This Inquirers' Department is conducted for the purpose of helping those who are studying the Bible. The answers are oftentimes only suggestive. They are never to be considered infallible, only as they agree with the infallible Word. The writer who may answer them does not consider that his opinion is infallible. He will simply give the best that he has, and plead with the inquirer to search the Word. Such questions only will be answered as, to the editors, seem to minister to the good of the readers and to the mission of the paper. We can not answer repeatedly in the same volume questions upon the same scripture. The name and address must accompany question, not for publication, but as an evidence of good faith, and that answer may be made by letter if deemed advisable. No letters are answered which do not contain the name of the writer. It is well always to enclose stamp for reply.

3860—The Tithe and the Promise

Is Mal. 3:10, 11 to be taken literally? If so, why are not all tithe payers wealthy? J. H. D.

We know no reason why we should not expect God's blessing upon us in a temporal way, altho the greatest of all blessings are spiritual. But the scripture does not promise wealth. It does promise great blessings, if we will bring "the whole tithe" (A.R.V.) and cease to rob Him in offerings also. The sin which God charges against His people is robbery in tithes and offerings. If they will cease this robbery, and recognize their duty to Him, He will come into their life, enlarge their heart and life, and make it overflow with blessings. If we are good stewards, He will enlarge our stewardship, give enlargement of heart and life, and if for our good, bring temporal blessings. The blessings of God are given with "all wisdom and prudence," and He gives us no more than we can use to His glory and for our good.

3861—In the Bosom of the Father

Did Jesus mean that He was in the bosom of the Father, also, when He was here on the earth? and shall we understand that Jesus could be in two places at the same time? John 1:18; 3:13. A. K.

Our Lord simply meant that He was in all things in absolute oneness with His Father, that there was living connection and life-bond between Them, so that while He personally was in the earth, yet He was as truly at one with the purposes and work of the Father as if He had been present in heaven; and in fact He was there represented absolutely by the Father, even as the Father was represented here upon this earth by Him. It is not a difficult thing for a mother to say concerning her child who may be thousands of miles distant, that "he is in my heart continually," and thus Jesus, by His living connection with the Father, by His doing of the Father's work, and by His absolute oneness, was still in purpose and affection in the bosom of His Father.

3862—Some Questions from a Catholic

1. What is the numerical strength of Seventh-day Adventists?
  2. Do you believe that no one will be saved that has not been baptized by immersion?
  3. Do you believe that it is wrong and is sin to eat meat? If so, how do you explain Christ's use of meat, and God's commandment, "All the beasts of the field . . . shall be to you for meat"?
  4. Is it not true that the Seventh-day Baptists and the Seventh-day Adventists are fast dying out, a deceasing?
  5. In what do the two last named denominations differ?
  6. Do you believe that all people who observe Sunday as the sabbath in contradistinction to Saturday will go to hell?
  7. Why are Adventists so bitter against Catholics, calling them harlots, and the church "the beast"?
- Remember that the Bible is a fiddle upon which almost any tune can be played, and that every one believes his religion is right, and if so, all the others must be obviously wrong.

C. J. B.

1. In round numbers, somewhat over 100,000 in the world.
2. The only water baptism there is immersion. As to the question of salvation, it depends on light and conscience. If one sins against conscious light, he must be condemned. Our Lord states the true principle: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." John 15:22. "The eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." 2 Chron. 16:9. Sometimes the intellect is inferior to the heart. There are times of ignorance when God seems to wink at sin, but it is because the people do not have the light.
3. No; we do not believe that it is sin to eat meat unless it is eaten not of faith; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:23. There have been times (as immediately after the Deluge), there doubtless will be times, when all that men can get to eat to sustain life is flesh food. And God suffers it. But the animal kingdom is becoming more and more diseased, and it is becoming more and more evident that flesh foods are increasingly unwholesome and disease-breeding. We opine

that the vast majority of flesh eaters eat meat because they like it, and not because it is the best food. The true Christian rule is, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31. We can not believe it is to God's glory to eat corrupt flesh foods when we can find food so much better.

4. About thirty years ago the Seventh-day Adventists numbered about eight thousand; now about one hundred thousand. About fifty years ago an aggregation of a single copy of each one of their publications could be purchased for thirty-five cents; to-day such an aggregation in cheapest binding would cost more than \$550. At that time they had one very small printing-office; now they have thirty-seven publishing houses in the world. They now have missions in almost every country of the world. Many illustrations of their growth might be given. Surely simple statistical reports do not look like "a deceasing." To God be all the glory. Seventh-day Baptists have not increased so rapidly.

5. Chiefly regarding prophetic interpretation, immortality and life through Jesus Christ alone, our Lord's priesthood, and this world's future. This department is too limited to discuss in detail or at length the differences.

6. No, no more than we believe that honest men who have passed counterfeit bills should go to jail. See answer to question 3. We believe that many Roman Catholics will be saved, not because of their error or because of their church, but in spite of it.

7. Seventh-day Adventists are not bitter against Catholics. We have naught against men or women of any denomination. We would feed or help a Catholic in need as soon as we would any other person. But we do not believe in the Roman Catholicism, the corrupt ecclesiasticism, of the centuries. We believe that union with the world on the part of the Christian is spiritual fornication, and we do not see why it would not be the same with the church. Any apostate, world-joined church is a harlot, whether it be Catholic or Protestant. But the church is not the "beast" power of prophecy. The beast is a symbol of the union of church and state.

Men play tunes upon a fiddle by an oscillating and variable bow, and by picking the strings. It is by the manipulation of the bow of traditionalism upon the strings of truth, by the picking of those strings of truth by the fingers of prejudice, love of self, skepticism, Higher Criticism, and apostasy, that the many discordant tunes are produced. The Bible is its own interpreter; and to the heart open to receive and the purpose to do God's will, the Bible tells the one great story, and reveals the same great Master, working harmony throughout God's universe. Eliminate the human creed makers and the human doubters, there will be no trouble over the unity and power of the church. It will take neither anathema nor law to hold it together.

3863—The Prohibition Platform

What do you think of that plank of the Prohibition platform of "one day's rest in seven"?

W. N. K.

We do not know just what is said in the plank, as we have seen no complete report of it. If it means a definite Sunday law, it certainly is wrong. If it demands the simple right of one day's rest in seven, regardless of the day, that may be a proper thing. We would prefer to see it before comment. As to voting for any particular man, the "Signs of the Times" has no advice to give. Every one must be responsible for his own mistakes.

3864—Service in the Heavenly Tabernacle

Was there any service performed in the heavenly tabernacle of which the earthly was a type before Christ's coming to this earth?

There certainly was no such service performed for sin in the heavenly sanctuary, as there was after Christ came to this earth, for Christ ministered His own blood, and His blood was not shed until He came to this earth, and we are expressly told in Heb. 9:15, "And for this cause He [Christ] is the Mediator of the new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the prom-

ise of the eternal inheritance." We may settle these facts: that God is ever merciful, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever;" that He had mercy to the one who sought Him, in ancient times, just as He has now; that it was not absolutely necessary that some one should be seated upon a throne, or that some one should be standing before an altar, for the soul to obtain mercy. All those ceremonies had their instructive lessons, and those lessons were ever to bring before the people that sin was sin, and that sin demanded death, but that God was merciful, and would give life for death, righteousness for sin.

3865—Supremacy of Turkey

What were the circumstances connected with Turkey's losing her supremacy August 11, 1840?

J. C. S.

Turkey was at war with one of her provinces, Egypt; and Mehemet Ali, the pasha of Egypt, was in a fair way to conquer Turkey, when that nation appealed to the powers, Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia. These powers took the case into their own hands, and Mehemet Ali was ordered to cease hostilities. Turkey had not power to conquer her own vassal, and her suzerainty was practically yielded to the powers in the year 1840. The messenger landed in Egypt August 11, 1840, but he did not place the ultimatum in the hands of Mehemet till August 20.

3866—Different Names

Can Gen. 26:34; 28:9; and 36:2, 3, be made to harmonize? The names of the persons seem to me to be mixed up a good deal. A. K.

Gen. 26:34 declares that Esau took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; 28:9 simply says that Esau took another wife besides these before named, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth; 36:2, 3 gives other names of the wives of Esau. The "Companion Bible" has this suggestion to offer on these names,—that Judith had a second name, Oholibamah, and Beeri also had another name, Anah; and that the Hivite tribe was a branch of the Hittite tribe, "Hittite" being the general term. Basemath also had a second name, Adah; the name "Basemath" was dropped to avoid confusion with the daughter of Ishmael. In chapter 26 we have general history, but in 36 precise genealogy. Regarding Ishmael's daughter, she seemed to have two names also, Mahalath, and a second name, Basemath. It was not uncommon for them to have more than one name, and that simple fact meets all these. The "Companion Bible" suggests that the additional name of Beeri means "the spring-finder."



Schedule for Week Ending October 5, 1912

Sunday	September 29	John 12
Monday	" 30	" 13
Tuesday	October 1	" 14
Wednesday	" 2	" 15
Thursday	" 3	" 16
Friday	" 4	" 17
Sabbath	" 5	" 18

Our whole week's reading lies in John, chapters 12 to 18, inclusive. We know of no more instructive week than this. Chapter 12, the anointing of Jesus, the riding into Jerusalem, God's voice witnessing to the blessedness of Jesus' choice to suffer, the liberty which our Lord grants to men, even to reject His sayings; chapter 13, the marvelous lesson of humility and service taught us by our Lord; chapters 14, 15, 16, the wonderful words of instruction and promises of the Comforter; chapter 17, the prayer of Jesus, not only for His disciples then, but for those who now live,—all that would believe on those He sent; and chapter 18, the beginning of the trials and persecution of our Master before the high priest and Pilate, and Pilate's effort to release Him. As we read these chapters, let our imagination grasp the scene, so that the great events may come before us in living pictures, impressing not only the sense of the ear, but of the eye as well. And read them with the prayer that the Spirit of God may impress them upon our heart as we read, and make them living lessons in our own life.



# Signs of the Times

"Even as we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the Gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who proveth our hearts."

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## EDITORIAL

### He Is Knocking at Your Door

**T**HE mighty Creator, who made all things that are in the universe, is the One who is also the Captain of our salvation. And it is none other than this mighty Personage who says continually to each one of us, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Rev. 3:20.

"Behold, I"—that is, the Mighty One, the Infinite One—am standing at the door of your heart, and am knocking. "Behold, I," who am the Creator of all things, the One who guides every world that circles in the infinite depths of space—even "I," who am the King of Eternity, am standing before you, knocking for admittance into your life.

Men are usually too busy in trying to get on in this life to take into account that there is such a Mighty One, such a great Personage, who is seeking to become their most intimate Friend and Helper. He says, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." O, the soul-satisfying blessedness of this promise! Think of the intimacy, and close, warm friendship that it suggests. Not only will I come in, says the Master, but having been admitted, I will sup with you, and you with Me.

Meditate for a moment on what it signifies to enter into such intimate relations. You are to "sup" with the Master. No more confidential friendship could be suggested. And then to think that this great character is the One who is making the advance! He is the One who is knocking for admission into our lives, not that He may get some personal benefit in a selfish way, but that He may help us by giving us the joys of all His infinite creation. And as we allow Him to help us in this way, He gets joy out of it; but it is the joy of seeing us happy instead of miserable.

Take another view of the matter: In asking us to let Him come into our lives, He is really asking us to come in contact with all His mighty works of creation. He is asking us to become acquainted with Him as Creator as well as Redeemer. To show that He wishes us to sense and keep in mind His power as Creator, He has given us the Sabbath to memorialize His creative power, and through the Sabbath He gives us one seventh of our time to meditate on the infinitude of His works and to revel in the joys of His matchless power.

Let us stand beneath the open sky of a clear night and behold the multitude of stars.

Each star is a world of some sort, and many of them are hundreds of times as large as the earth on which we dwell. Let us stand and gaze at world after world, until we have viewed every one that we can see with the naked eye, and then let us take the telescope for a still further view. With the aid of this instrument, we will find hundreds of thousands of other worlds where before we saw nothing but empty space. And having



"If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him."

viewed all this, let us turn to the sublime language of Job and learn that "lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways: and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power ["mighty deeds," margin] who can understand?" Job 26:14.

Having taken this view, let us seek to realize that we are now in contact with the "One that inhabiteth eternity." We are taking a finite, limited, imperfect, mortal view of His immense domain. Then let us stop long enough to drink in the blessedness

of the joy that the One who is the mighty Creator is the same One who asks us to let Him be our Guest. Let us hear Him again while He says, "Behold, I"—this Infinite One, this mighty Creator—"stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Note a further blessedness of the invitation: It says, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in." This wonderful Master is too great to be narrow and exclusive in His invitations and His affections. For altho He says of Himself that

He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," and that His "name is Holy," and that He dwells "in the high and holy place," yet He is "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite." Isa. 57:15.

The power of His presence is so great that any individual who will permit Him to come in will have his life insensibly ennobled and uplifted. And therefore the Lord can safely give the invitation to "any man;" for even tho the man may be degraded and sinful—even tho his life may be such that he will be overpowered with shame when he hears the knock of the refined and righteous Master—yet does this Lord entreat that He may be permitted to enter and become the honored Guest. The very influence of His presence, and the application of His sacred life-blood, are to make the man all over. He is not to remain the defiled sinner that he now is, but he is to be changed by the mighty power of this infinite Creator.

If we are tempted to doubt His power, then He bids us go out on another starry night to take an additional view of His innumerable array of worlds; then in the confidential manner that no one can describe, but that every one understands who has come in contact with the Master, this Lord of Creation breathes into our very soul the assurance, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18.

But you will hear some one say that this great Creator is too mighty to stoop to notice a little, finite man. Do not get such a misunderstanding. Because He is so mighty, because He is ab-

solutely infinite, therefore He can and does have the ability to notice each and every one. And, besides, this is the one revolted planet. This is the one place where things have gone wrong, and man is in sin and rebellion against the righteous laws that God has made to govern the universe. And for that very reason, the infinite God is giving more of His time and attention to this one planet and the beings upon it than to all His universe besides. We should expect that such would be the case. And because the Lord is





giving so much of His time and His omnipotent powers to this revolted planet, we find such statements as this in His Word: "The eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." 2 Chron. 16:9.

You are ready to say, perhaps, that it sounds well to talk of such close intimacy with the Creator of all things, but you fail to find the evidence that it is so. Come right up close to the text already quoted, and see that the evidence is in the very words themselves. It may seem strange to hear the assertion that the words contain the evidence of their own authenticity. But Infinite Power is able to put life into His words so that the very words themselves speak to the innermost heart. If such power and such life were not in the very words, we might well doubt them.

But let us hear these words again: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." He says "Behold." "Just look, and you will see. Just think for a moment on your own experiences, and you will realize that I have followed you all your life. You have repulsed Me again and again," the Master is saying to you, "but I have ever remained knocking for entrance. You have tried to talk infidelity; you have written infidelity; you have listened to infidelity; you have laughed loudly at the puns that infidelity has tried to make against My name. In all these ways you have tried to drown the sound of My knocking. But you can never forget the times when I have stepped up to your side when you were standing in quiet before the open grave; never can you forget when I have spoken to you when in the face of awful calamity; never can you erase the fact that there has ever been with you the quiet voice which no one else could hear, but which has been as distinct to you as the ringing of bells in the depths of your own soul."

This wonderful Master loves us, and hence He follows us ever. He wishes that we may spend eternity with Him, and is urgent in His invitations and entreaties. How can men find it in their hearts to turn from One who is so gracious, and so great! T.

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### Life Is Short, and Much to Do

IT is said of one of the great inventors of this time, that on a certain occasion he was walking to dinner with one of his associates, and neither of them was saying anything. They were simply walking along thinking. Suddenly the inventor broke into a run, saying as he did so, "There is an immense amount to be done, and life is very short."

The inventor in question, sad to say, believes that there is no almighty God, the infinite Creator of all things. He has expressed himself as believing that when death comes to man, it ends everything for him; that when his breath leaves his body, he is nothing more than a lump of clay, that will never be revived by a resurrection, and that there is absolutely no life for man beyond the tomb.

This inventor has delved deeply into useful sciences all his life. He has been in con-

tinual touch with the mighty forces of creation, and yet he has shut himself away from recognizing the Creator. How sad it is that such a life should contain such a void! To make no mention of the life that is beyond, what indescribable joys, even in this life, is this man shutting away from himself!

But still this same man, with no hope after death, can feel the weight of the value of time. "There is an immense amount to be done, and life is very short." Every true Christian feels this same impulse of the value of time, only he feels it to an intensified degree. The trouble, however, is that there are so many who do not allow Christianity, with its mighty power, really to take hold of the life. And hence there is a vast army who merely make a profession, and who only count in the census, but who really know nothing about the Christ of the living God. All who actually know the Master, will realize that time is very short, and that there is an immense amount to be done. T.

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### The Bible and Agnosticism

"Worship Him that made heaven and earth." Rev. 14:7.

THE religious knowledge of which the Sabbath is a memorial, and the religion of which it is the sign, take their root in the all-embracing and ever-enduring principle of God as the Creator and upholder of the universe. And the scientific knowledge of which the Sabbath is also the memorial, and the science of which it is the sign, take their root in the selfsame principle that God is the special Creator and preserver of heaven and earth.

Between that religious knowledge and that scientific knowledge, and between that religion and that science, there is no difference save in the matter of their interpretation; for tho the knowledge of religion must come in most part from revelation, and the knowledge of science in the main from the material creation, yet the two are but different aspects of harmonious truth. They weave and interweave, being bound together by the great unity of God, and by His oneness with all who are and all that is in harmony with Him.

But not all who have the knowledge of religion, believe literally and uncompromisingly the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis; and many who have large scientific knowledge—in fact the greater portion of those who have such knowledge—deny the literal and plain interpretation of this first portion of the Bible. The doubts of both these classes come from listening to the cavilings of those who deny to our world the large supernatural working of the Creator.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." "Through faith we understand." Many seem to think that some things must be understood by looking with the eyes, by hearing with the ears, by feeling with the hands, by juggling test-tubes and manipulating balances, and by ransacking the brain; but the Word declares that this truth of creation is not thus understood. It is apprehended by faith alone. "Through faith we understand."

This is because creation is too large for the unassisted mind of man. We know only that which comes within our narrow range of experience. We are prone to read all other

things in the light of that experience. But there are no processes in existence to-day that can give any large light upon the mighty process of the creative work.

There are no forces now, no methods of growth, no forms of development, that can build a world, give it never so many eons, provided, of course, it start where this world started; namely, with darkness and a formless void.

But He who built the universe has described to us the process in so far as we can receive it. We are not left to guess at the matter; we are not left to meager theories, inadequate hypotheses, and subtle speculations. We are told in language plain and clear of the wonderful work of that wonderful time when earth began.

And now "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." But not all men have faith. Not all men through faith understand. Such men have chosen to call themselves agnostics, which is the Greek word for one who knows not, for whom the Latin word is "infidel."

Agnosticism is the science of knowing what not to know, or at least of knowing what it will be best, for argument's sake, not to know. It points out not only the unknown, but also that which is unknowable.

Now it appears to us that, if a thing is unknown to an agnostic, it is very unwise and very much against his don't-know creed to claim so much as to *know* that anything he doesn't know is unknowable. But this is just what some of them claim. Spencer has told us, for example, that "the power which the universe manifests to us is utterly unscrutable."

How does he know that it is unscrutable? If a thing is wholly unknown to a man, he is in complete ignorance of it. And being in this dense ignorance, he can assert only that it is unknown. He can not logically say that it is unknowable even to himself; for he knows not what moment the light may pierce the gloom. And to say that in the absolute sense it is unknowable to all, is for a philosopher to commit philosophical suicide.

God is knowable. More than that: God is known by His works. Rightly contemplated, material things reveal their Maker: (Rom. 1:20.)

If the agnostic would stick to his creed of "I don't know," he would be at least consistent with that creed; but when he tells us that he *knows* that things can not be known, he gets outside his creed, and makes himself ridiculous.

The agnostic knows too much. He is hardly consistent. He knows just what to know and what not to know in order to pass in certain quarters as a great and learned man. When, for instance, the believer in the Bible teaches the doctrine of special creation, our agnostic smiles, looks superior, and reminds his Christian acquaintance that all knowledge of the past must come to us by assuming that nothing has been produced by causes different in kind from those to which they now owe their origin. "Geology," says Agnostic Huxley, the first of the genus, "could tell us nothing except for the assumption that, millions of years ago, water, heat, gravitation, friction, animal and vegetable life, caused effects of the same kind as they now cause. Nay, even physical astronomy . . . is founded upon the same assumption."





Thus the agnostic thinks he puts a damper on the enthusiasm of the Christian. He argues that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." That is, he argues that way when he is fighting the Christian doctrine of a special creation.

But when he is arguing for the evolutionary hypothesis and spontaneous generation he talks quite differently. We have just read Huxley's words that science is founded on the assumption that what is now always has been. Now let us put with it other words of Huxley. This will be a case of Huxley *versus* Huxley; and One of authority once said, "A house divided against itself can not stand."

This agnostic first of all admits that the doctrine of life only from antecedent life is victorious all along the whole line at the present day. Admitting that spontaneous generation is impossible in nature now, he says: "If it were given me to look beyond the abyss of geologically recorded time to the still more remote period when the earth was passing through physical and chemical conditions which it can no more see again than a man may recall his infancy, I should expect"—what? That everything was produced by causes in the same way that they are to-day?—By no means. "I should expect to be," he says, "a witness of the *evolution of living protoplasm from not living matter*, under forms of great simplicity."

Now what do you think of that? Thus agnostics believe in something that does not now take place; they admit it can not and doubtless never can take place; and furthermore they admit that they have no evidence that it ever did take place. And yet, without past, present, or future evidence of spontaneous generation, "because they need it in their business," they declare their belief in it. After such profession of faith on their part, I am sure they have no ground for taunting the Christian because of credulity.

Huxley, after stating this preposterous belief of his, admits he has no reason to call it anything but philosophic faith. *Faith*, mind you. And this from a man who thinks about faith in this fashion: "The man of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification." "Skepticism is the highest of duties; blind faith the one unpardonable sin."—"Methods and Results," pages 40, 41.

Thus is knowledge justified of her children, and consistency found to be a jewel.

But as the Word says, when men argue that all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation, they are willingly ignorant of the fact that there have been mighty cataclysms, and nature has not taken an even course. And these modern scientists know that if there has been no change at any time, and if the conditions that now exist always existed, there could be no origin to this world. Nothing originates now. There is no new thing under the sun. And to argue for no change is to argue for the eternity of the world.

But every man, be he scientist or religionist, believes in a beginning. The Christian points back to the special creation of this world by the almighty fiat of God. The agnostic points back to the living evolving from the not-living "*under forms of great simplicity*." Look on the two views, and take your choice.

Hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes! Thus it seemed good in the sight of God. The agnostic, while in name he denies knowledge, in profession claims all knowledge, a knowledge beyond his fellows. He not only knows all that is known, but he knows also all the things that can't be known. These he has most conveniently labeled, and put away on the shelf, where they won't bother or distress him.

The promoters of fresh scientific ideas have established the fact "that minds as yet untrained are more accessible to new truths than those occupied, encumbered, glutted with fixed ideas."

The Word of God, rightly tested, has in its own words the proof of its heavenly origin. Huxley, who seemed to know so much of how this world did and did not come into existence, admits that his theory of evolution will not account for the religion of the Bible. Quoting the words of Micah, "And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" he says: "If any so-called religion takes away from this great saying of Micah, I think it wantonly mutilates; while, if it adds thereto, I think it obscures the perfect ideal of religion. But what extent of knowledge, what acuteness of scientific criticism, can touch this, if any one possessed of knowledge, or acuteness, could be absurd enough to make the attempt? Will the progress of research prove that justice is worthless and mercy hateful; will it ever soften the bitter contrast between our actions and our aspirations; or show us the bounds of the universe, and bid us say, Go to, now we comprehend the infinite?"—"Science and Hebrew Tradition," pages 161, 162.

If the Bible, according to Huxley's notion, holds false science, it certainly holds, in his opinion, "the perfect ideal of religion," which can not be in any way improved. If a bramble-tree can not produce grapes, whence came these life-giving clusters of the vine of truth?

After all the criticisms, arguments, speculations, theories, and conjectures, are in and safely cared for, "I take again my old Bible, and I say to it: Just as thou art, I love thee, thou who dost weep with all our tears and shout aloud with our joys! It is sweet to read thee after the fashion of the ignorant, so great thou art in thy anonymity and thy eternity! Thy authors and thy origin are of small account; the human soul has brought thee forth in suffering and in hope; thou makest the measure of its mercy and its nobility. And I love in thee all those who have drunk at thy sources, reposed in thy shade, and laid their heads upon thee for the last sleep."

Can that which is thus so true to all the highest and best there is in the soul of man and the world, be false and untrue in all its supernatural aspects? And when it comes to this "last sleep," is it the natural or the supernatural of the Word that gives us hope?

The agnostic trumpets his ignorance. He confesses his spiritual numbness. And the Christian never misses the mark farther than when he refuses this testimony of the agnostic. When the agnostic tells us he is deaf, blind, dumb, torpid, and dead to the spiritual world, we must believe him. It is the Word of God Himself. "The natural man re-

ceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit," "he can not see the kingdom." "The nescience of the agnostic philosophy is the proof from experience that to be carnally minded is death."

A deaf man knows not the world of music; a blind man knows not the beauties of light; and the natural man knows not the things of the Spirit of God. They are discerned only by the spiritual sense.

The agnostic may not be a monster, but he is a dwarf. He can not be anything else and be an agnostic. Plants are not the only things that can be dwarfed. You can dwarf a soul, if you keep it out of its true life element. For a time it may have a name to live; but like a plant shut away from the light, its sickly pallor shows the awful inroads of disease and degeneration.

While living outwardly a life above reproach, it is nevertheless a case of arrested life and growth. Having a name to live, it steadily approaches death. With Ruskin, we do not wonder at what men suffer, but we wonder at what they lose.

Against the idea of a natural religion and a natural science, we put the idea of a supernatural religion and a supernatural science. And this mighty supernature is revealed in that special creation when God spoke the word, and all things *both* natural and spiritual stood up before Him.

Opposed to agnosticism is the clear understanding which comes through not blind, but intelligent faith. And the great bulwark against this know-nothingness of agnosticism is the Sabbath truth of the work and rest of God. It stands to remind us of the supernatural working of creation, that still works as at the first to make man, as well as all things ultimately, even as God declared them at the first to be, "good;" yea, very good.

R.

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"Vice commissions," and "wars on vice," etc., are coming to be quite the order of the day in many sections of the country. A San Francisco judge has recently said that the "white slave" traffic and the vices that it fosters have become a leading menace of the civilized world. One city after another is breaking out with epidemics of grafting and all the crimes that go with it. The papers day by day are filled with the accounts of the nauseating details of such criminality. Anywhere you meet men, on the streets, in stores, or elsewhere, you will find that they can readily be led into discussions of these conditions and into deploring the situation. It ought to be apparent to all, that the foundations of society are breaking up. And every one ought to know that when in the past any nation got into such conditions of debauchery, she invariably went down. And now that the whole world is in this condition, there can be but one conclusion. This world can not stand long in the condition to which it is plunging with such headlong speed. Men who will stop long enough to weigh carefully the actual conditions of to-day ought to be able to see this clearly.

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The despatches continue to report "cloudbursts" and other severe storms that are causing much disaster in many parts of the country. Have you observed that these things are greatly on the increase? and have you sought for the meaning of it?

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On September 3 regular wireless communication was established between San Francisco and Honolulu, Hawaii, by the Federal Telegraph Company.



## A Solemn Lesson

By Mrs. E. G. White

**T**HE solemn fate of the five foolish virgins, presented in the parable of the ten virgins, is recorded to warn those who, while professing the faith of Christ, have become cold and backslidden.

The five foolish virgins represent the careless, indolent, self-satisfied professors of religion. They have a calm expectation of entering heaven sometime, yet they have not purified their souls by obeying the truth. They understand the theory of truth, but have no vital connection with God. They trust to feeling, and neglect to search the Scriptures. They are satisfied to walk in the sparks of their own kindling. We are all exhorted to be diligent, that we may make our calling and election sure. But I am greatly troubled, fearing—yes, knowing—that there are many who profess the truth who are not testing their lives and characters by God's great moral standard of righteousness. They are careless; they have not the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps. They are cherishing hidden sins, which no human eye can see. They know that they are not pure and without spot, and should diligently seek God, that they may cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the sight of God.

There are many ideas in the world as to what is sin. The deist says that sin is dishonesty, a lack of patriotism, honor, and manliness. Those who have little idea as to what constitutes religion will tell you that sin is murder, adultery, robbery, and crime. But what does the Word of God define it to be? John writes, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Without the law we have no knowledge of what sin is. Those who have no respect for the law will be deceived by entertaining hopes of entering heaven.

### Knowledge of the Law Not Enough

But a knowledge of the law is not enough. He who accepts the law, who acknowledges the claims of the law, who yet feels satisfied with himself, and has no experience in being born again, will fail of keeping the law, and will come under its condemnation. God's law not only covers every deed of outward life, but also penetrates to the intents and purposes of the heart. The man who will meet Christ in peace will be the man who follows in His footsteps, who takes Him for his example and righteousness. Jesus said, "I have kept My Father's commandments." He was the embodiment of all that was noble and holy; and whoever obeys Christ, fulfils the law of God, meets every claim upon him, treats every being as the purchase of the blood of Christ.

He who does not yield to the claims of the law of God, sets himself above God, breaks away from God's rule of right, and becomes disloyal, as did the great deceiver in the beginning. Would that some who claim to be commandment keepers could see how their cases stand in the register above! O, that all who are falling short of the principles of righteousness might realize that they do not meet the broad, far-reaching claims of the

law of God upon them! Repentance for sin is the first step in conversion. Repentance is an intense hatred of sin in all its forms. Pharisaism permits of self-complacency; and those who are self-righteous appear to have a form of piety, but at heart they are corrupt. They may talk of their hope of heaven, when, in fact, they have not taken the first step toward heaven.

We are not under a system of mere requirements, mere justice, and unsympathizing rigor. The penalty of transgressing the law has fallen upon our Substitute and Surety, and for a time has been suspended, so that the guilty do not feel its weight; but the object of this suspension is not to teach us that its claims are over, its exactions set aside, but to attract us to holiness, to obedience. Nothing is changed except the manner of bringing men to obey the law. Obey its claims we must. The first step toward

### Night

By M. Elisabeth Burns-Howell

O, the rare enchantment, like the mystery of dreams,  
When the moon is shining silver, with her pure and placid beams!  
When the air is heavy freighted with the scent of fragrant blooms!  
O, 'tis then that rest aboundeth, and a sweet refreshing comes!

It is then that peace surpassing settles down upon the soul,  
And we feel, beyond our striving and our strife, a higher goal;  
For the eye with wider vision looks enraptured on the sight,  
As it sees in faith a future like the holy hush of night.

Cometh now a sense of safety, and a calm serene enthralls,  
With the joy of trust unfailing, e'en when seeming ill befalls;  
For the Hand that stills the tumult and bestows the balm of night,  
Holds the suns and all their systems, and shall shape our course aright.

obedience is repentance. We are to see the excellence of its requirements by beholding the wrong of disobedience.

### Selfishness Distresses the Truly Regenerated

He who is truly repentant, he who is regenerated, hates sin. All manner of selfishness is distressing to him. Indifference to God on the part of those around him grieves him. He is not led to exalt self in the performance of his duty, but abhors self. "I abhor myself" is the language of the godly of all ages, who have had a clear view of the purity and holiness of Christ. But those who are but superficial Christians seek to exalt self by depreciating others. The clearer the views of the character of Christ, the more humble will be our views of self. Like Job, Isaiah, Daniel, David, and Paul, we shall feel that our comeliness is turned in us into corruption.

Those who are represented by the foolish virgins have not this sense of their own unworthiness. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. The same principles of truth are presented in the parable of the two builders,—one built upon the rock, and the other upon the sand. Jesus says: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and

doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

It is not a matter of little consequence to us as to how we hear and how we treat the truth of God. To misunderstand the truth, to fail to appreciate it, because we do not cherish light that comes to us, will tend to make us careless in our character building, and we shall have our foundation laid upon the sand. The wise builder builds upon the Rock Christ Jesus, no matter what may be the inconvenience. He builds not upon human but upon divine merit, accepting the righteousness of Christ as his own, and as his only hope of salvation. The foolish builder builds upon the sand, and through his carelessness, or prejudice, or through the deceptions of the natural heart, he cherishes a self-righteous spirit, and places human wisdom in the place where God's wisdom should have the supremacy; and how terrible are the consequences!

### Unwise Builders

There are many unwise builders, and when the storm of temptation comes and beats upon them, it is made evident that their foundation is only sliding sand. They are left in gross darkness, without faith, without principles, and without foundation. The five foolish virgins had a real interest in the gospel. They knew what was the perfect standard of righteousness; but their energies were paralyzed with self-love; for they lived to please and glorify themselves, and had not the oil of grace in their vessels with which to replenish their lamps. They were often distressed by the enemy, who knew their weakness, and placed darkness before them in the semblance of light. Truth—precious, life-giving truth—represented as oil, appeared to them as unessential; and Satan took advantage of their blindness, ignorance, and weakness of faith, and they had a fluctuating experience, based on uncertain principles.

All who wait for the heavenly Bridegroom are represented in the parable as slumbering because their Lord delayed His coming; but the wise roused themselves at the message of His approach, and responded to the message, and their spiritual life was replenished. Their spiritual discernment was not all gone, and they sprang into line. As they took hold of the grace of Christ, their religious experience became vigorous and abundant, and their affections were set upon things above. They discerned where was the source of their supply, and appreciated the love that God had for them. They opened their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts. Their lights were trimmed and burning, and sent forth steady rays into the moral darkness of the world. They glorified God, because they had the oil of grace in their hearts, and did the very work that their Master did before them,—went forth to seek and to save those who were lost.



## A Spiritual Autobiography—VI

By J. A. L. Derby



THE more I have studied the law of God, the more I have found in it to study. Like the nerve fibers of the spinal column, which ramify into millions of subdivisions, extending to all parts of the body, so the law of God runs into the history of every moment of time, and directly or indirectly into every part of nature and revelation. The laws of nature are God's usual ways of acting with inanimate things—His will concerning the obedience of such objects. The Decalogue is His will with reference to the obedience of free moral agents.

As a matter of fact, it is not man on trial during the ages; it is the law of God. Incidentally, man is tested, tho he is but the means by which the demonstration is wrought. When a third of the angelic host, with Lucifer as their leader, revolted, before time was, the results of disobedience to the divine law were not known by experience.

Angels are but finite beings; therefore only by faith in God's word (I do not, of course, mean the Bible) could they know that rebellion against His government is ultimately death. Had the revolt of the angels been immediately crushed by their destruction, opportunity for doubt would still have existed. God will suffer sin to remain—in other words, will permit Satan to work out his claims—in as many ways and to such an extent as is necessary to satisfy every rational creature that infraction of the law must result in ruin.

### The Supreme Test

What was the test in the Garden of Eden?—Obedience or death. The old serpent denied it. And ever since, he has been persuading men not only that there is something faulty with God's requirements, but also that no such dire results will follow rejection of them.

When I once clearly saw this fact, and remembered, further, that the arch-adversary of God is still "the prince of this world," I knew for certain that I should find the majority of people in so-called Christian lands tinkering the law up in some way different from the form in which God gave it. And is it so?—Most assuredly. Where is the "Christian" nation that does not observe Sunday instead of the Sabbath?

### What God Desires Most

Yet God has never, with reference to His law, had any other purpose than obedience. If necessary, we might quote illustrative texts covering the period from creation to Moses. But it will be sufficient to begin with the Exodus and the Mosaic law. Observe the emphatic statement in Jer. 7:21-23:

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you."

Again, later on, when the chosen people had demanded a king, and the Lord had

granted one, the same principle is reasserted. To King Saul, the prophet Samuel said: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." 1 Sam. 15:22, 23.

So from creation to Christ, obedience and sin stand as opposites. To be obedient was to refrain from sin. To sin was disobedience. When Jesus came, we find Him accepting unquestioningly this antithesis as correct.

And we have already seen that His first preaching was a call to repentance from sin, with no intimation that sin was in any sense a different thing from what it had been since creation. Sin in the time of Christ was sin precisely as in the time of Adam or Solomon. And such it is to-day, and such it will be

### Railway to Heaven

(An old poem printed by request)

The line to heaven by Christ was made,  
With heavenly truths the rails are laid.  
From earth to heaven the line extends—  
To life eternal, where it ends.  
Repentance is the station where  
All passengers are given share.

No fee for them is there to pay,  
For Jesus is Himself the way.  
The Bible is the engineer.  
It points the way to heaven so clear.  
Through tunnels dark and dreary here,  
It does the way to glory steer.

God's love's the fire, His truth the steam  
Which drives the engine and the train.  
All you who would to glory ride,  
Must come to Christ, in Him abide,  
The first and second and third class,  
Repentance, faith, and holiness.

You must the way to glory gain,  
Or you with Christ can never reign.  
Come then, poor sinner! Now's the time.  
At any station on the line,  
If you repent, and turn from sin,  
The train will stop, and take you in.

forever. The same law that condemned the sin of Cain, condemns any kind of murder to-day. I may commit murder by drinking whisky; you may murder yourself by wilful starvation. But Cain and you and I all violate the same law: "Thou shalt not kill." I may worship joss; you may love money so much as to make you dishonest; another may love his tobacco so dearly that it keeps him from becoming a Christian. But we all three break exactly the same command as did the worshipers of Moloch: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." You may keep Sunday; I may keep Friday; another man may keep Wednesday. But none of us would be keeping the day God blessed and sanctified as a memorial of His creative work, and set apart for us to observe as a sign that He is the Lord our God. (Eze. 20:12, 20.) Jesus kept the Ten Commandments, and taught that salvation depends upon our accepting Him to enable us to keep them.

### Each True Messenger and the Decalogue

This brief sketch of the rule of duty through the ages is sufficient to illustrate how every true messenger of God has confirmed obedience to the Decalogue. Nay,

more: As far back as we trace events in heaven, before time was, we find no change in the righteous standard that points out sin. In the eternity past, the Father and the Son, foreseeing the departure of man from that standard, planned (I speak human-wise, for God does not plan) to bring Their erring creature back. "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory," etc. (1 Cor. 2:7-10.) "Who hath saved us [from sin, to eternal life, which Jesus said depends on keeping the Ten Commandments], and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9.

In a former article I gave in outline the line of Bible study by which I came to see that God has but one fundamental law for His government both on earth and in heaven. To this agree the words of the psalmist, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119:89. We noticed the final nature of that law,—a fact well understood by His ancient people, as brought to light in such texts as the following: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him." Eccl. 3:14. A still more emphatic declaration of this truth was made by Jesus Himself: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. And later, the great apostle, showing the relation of faith to the law, affirms unequivocally: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31.

But what did Paul mean by our establishing the law? Was it not firmly settled before? Did God need the feeble hand of man to make His law permanent? That is not the sense in which the apostle uses the word. What he means is, that we acknowledge and verify the truth and obligation of the law. That is exactly what the obedience of faith does. Yet, notwithstanding the absolute permanency of the law, from the standpoint of the divine purpose, that fact could not be fully appreciated by finite creatures until they had a demonstration of it. The occasion for such a demonstration came about by sin. Would God change His law to save guilty man, or must that law be satisfied? The penalty for violation is death. Must man die? Death there must be, or the law altered or abolished. But God could not change the law; for being, as it is, a law of perfect righteousness, it must be a transcript of God's character—the very righteousness of God. Therefore man must either die or provide a substitute. But as no finite substitute could avail, God forever demonstrated the unalterable nature of His law by Himself suffering its penalty for man. Righteousness is life; sin only ends in death. Hence death could have no final conquest over God manifest in flesh. If, then, we by faith unite ourselves with Him, our lives are "hid with Christ in God," and He being risen from the dead, henceforth to die no more, we have eternal life in Him.

### The Supreme Manifestation of Love

But the death of Christ was something besides the vindication of Heaven's law; it was the supreme manifestation of God's love





for man. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. There is a remarkable law of human nature, ultimate in character, and passing analysis, that love begets love. I know of no explanation of this any more than of the fact that we laugh instead of cry at the ridiculous, manifest sorrow by weeping rather than by laughing, or burn with indignation at injustice, etc. All we can say is that we are so made. Gravitation is, and that is all we know of its origin, except, of course, that its source is God.

Now if the love of God, especially as displayed in the sacrifice of Jesus, is not enough to arouse our highest loyalty to Him, and reconcile us to His law of love, I—well—

but surely none can resist it, if he understands it.

And thus we have the new covenant—the law written in our affections by love, established in our hearts by faith. And thus shall it be throughout the universe, when these dark days of sin shall have been blotted from the calendar of eternity. Then shall righteousness cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Then "it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." Then shall be "heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,"—yea, even by His law of love.

How well has he succeeded? Paganism and Papacy, Mariolatry and saint-worship, Spiritualism, witchcraft, ancestor-worship, and a thousand and one offshoots of these tap-root errors,—all bear undeniable witness to his tremendous and calamitous success. And thus we find cropping out everywhere the idea that when a man dies, he is *not* dead!

Then what shall you and I believe? I answer, Believe the plain word of the Almighty; and when Satan suggests to us that there is some undying principle in man that is by nature immortal and that can never die, repeat to him the words of the One who created man, and who surely must know best: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Was not this a strange thing for the Almighty to declare, if He *knew* there was a principle in man which *could not* die to all eternity?

Man was created a candidate for immortality. God had said, "Obey and live; disobey and die." By yielding to sin, man forfeited eternal life. He lost, also, his innocence and his inheritance.

The mission of Christ was to buy all these infinite blessings back again—for us.

If we have faith in Him, we need not perish. Otherwise there is no hope for us.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

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## Sin, and What Man Lost by It

By Mrs. L. D. Avery-Stuttle



OW," says one, "I never could see the justice in punishing Adam so severely, just for committing *one little sin*,—only eating an apple!"

But let us reason for a moment. If we take into consideration the vastness of the benefits bestowed upon Adam, and compare these with the trifling prohibition laid upon him, we stand amazed.

All the myriad trees of the garden freely given him, with only *one* reservation! What better terms could even infinite wisdom and love have made?

Suppose God had *reserved all* the trees in the garden, and given to Adam only *one*. But even *then* He would only have been exercising His just prerogative as Creator.

Or suppose Adam and Eve had taken the fruit to satisfy their hunger, which they had no other means of appeasing. But they were neither hungry nor thirsty nor in want. Every need had been supplied by the hand of their loving and thoughtful Creator. Every wish of their heart had been anticipated.

The means for satisfying the demands of the most fastidious appetite were scattered about them in lavish profusion.

The most perfect beauty appeared everywhere,—beauty of tint and color, of form and feature. The music of the most beautiful song-birds entranced their senses. Nor do I apprehend that their ears were strangers to the ravishing music of the angel choirs.

And in return for all this prodigality of gifts, God asked but one thing. He did not ask man to perform some great deed, or to purchase this munificent estate by hard labor. In fact, God did not ask the least service of Adam.

He simply asked him to *refrain* from doing just one thing, and that a thing which of itself would present the very least temptation imaginable.

### Had Been Warned of Consequences

Besides, the Almighty told them plainly just what the dire consequences would be if they did not obey His word.

Suppose some great king had presented me with ten thousand dollars in gold, and should only ask that *one* dollar remain untouched.

What would you think of the ingratitude which would prompt me to covet and actually to appropriate even this dollar to my own use?

One would think that pure gratitude alone, even with no other reason, would have prompted the man to be obedient. God had given him everything. Satan had given him nothing. Yet man voluntarily chose to disobey God; and as if that were not enough, he went over to the arch-enemy of God and righteousness, and joined forces with His implacable foe. Man turned his back upon his best Friend.

### Contradicting the Almighty

For one man to call another man a liar, is accounted one of the grossest insults that it is possible to offer him.

Let us see if a like insult was not offered to the God of heaven: God had said in reference to the Tree of Knowledge, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

But Satan insinuates his ugly presence in the form of a serpent, and at once begins, in wily, subtle speech to contradict the word of the Lord. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die"—a flat contradiction! And—O, the ingratitude of it!—they took the word of the arch-fiend, in preference, and directly against, the word of the Eternal—their best Friend! Think of it, all ye who, with sentimental pity, condone the monstrous sin of the man and the woman in Eden—think of it, and wonder in amazement at the long-suffering and mercy of Him whose outraged kindness would call for sterner words and severer punishment.

And even yet, as if in haste to spare them suffering, God gives them at ONCE a blessed hope in the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.

### Satan's Masterpiece Perpetuated

But that first lie of Satan's in Eden, was so successful that he considers it his masterpiece, even yet. And well he may. And hence he has industriously and insidiously whispered the same lie into the willing ears of every generation of men which has peopled the earth since Adam's time: "Thou shalt not surely die."

## Toleration Versus Liberty



HERE is a wide difference between toleration and liberty. Toleration is a concession. We find it granted where there is more or less of a union of the church and the state. It also implies more or less of a censure or disapproval. We tolerate what we dislike or disapprove but can not well prevent.

Toleration implies the right of the state to interfere in matters of religion and to control public worship. Russia tolerates Romanists and Protestants. Turkey tolerates Christians.

Again toleration is simply a matter of expediency. It is a gift of man. Persecution always results from a union of church and state. Toleration comes as a relaxation of that union. It is an intermediate state between religious liberty and religious persecution.

Full religious liberty requires a peaceful separation of the spiritual and secular powers. No one in a free country wants to be tolerated for his religious opinions or convictions.

The theory of the Middle Ages was intolerance and persecution. The theory of enlightened Europe to-day is toleration. That of the United States is religious freedom, and equality of all sects before the law.

By religious liberty or soul freedom is meant the natural and inalienable right of every soul to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. That religion is and must be a voluntary service.

No earthly power has any right to compel conformity to any creed or kind of worship. If any one sect is given a preference by law over other sects, that destroys perfect religious liberty. Religious liberty is not a gift



of man. It is a gift of God. It is not a matter of expediency. It is a principle. It is a natural, inalienable right of every man. It is inherent and fundamental.

It is true that liberty may be abused, but no amount of abuse can destroy its right use. The only proper attitude of the state toward the religion of its subjects is to see that each one is protected in the right to worship God as his own conscience may dictate. A government best consults its own interests when it protects all and persecutes none. "Liberty, the greatest of all earthly blessings—give us that precious jewel, and you may take everything else."

W. F. MARTIN.

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## Race Gambling Legalized Again in California

Shall It Be?

**T**HAT such a question should be put at this time seems almost startling, and unless it were warranted by the facts, would demand an apology from me. But some facts need to be noted.

After years of work by reform forces in California, the Walker-Young bill came into the law in our state in February, 1911, and race gambling left the state—"never to return," some of us hoped. But in May, 1912, the horsemen of the state met and determined to use the "initiative" to put upon the ballot, at the coming November election, "Race gambling—yes or no?" At this meeting, about sixty men were present, representing probably millions of money. It was proposed, we understand, to raise a fund of \$100,000 to secure a place on the ballot. And while they needed only 31,000 names on the petition, they secured 59,000, having had well-paid canvassers to secure the signatures. Thus we see that almost twice as many signatures as were needed to put this question on the ballot, were secured, while petitions for Sunday rest bill and anti-prize-fight law fell far behind in the number of signatures needed.

Now it is not for a moment thought probable that a majority of the voters of California want the return of the race gambling; but it is known certainly that all the gambling fraternity know exactly what is on, and are working with might and main to secure votes for it, and that multitudes of the best people are absolutely indifferent to these matters—some through ignorance of the movements of the enemy, and many who do not think that religion or goodness has any part in secular or political matters.

Upon such indifference as this, I have no doubt, the gamblers counted when they considered the matter of securing the ballot on this thing. Now when we consider that all they need to do, is to get a majority of votes cast upon that particular amendment, and that on national elections we are not in the habit of giving much attention to "small matters," they no doubt argued that only those concerned would vote at all, on this number; hence their confidence and hope of success.

To allow this propaganda to succeed would put us back a decade in moral reform in California, and it must not be. With this conviction of the importance of the matter, and the assurance that all the good people need,

is to see the real danger to be aroused to action, the following steps are being taken:

1. A large committee, of twenty-five or thirty, is being formed to lead in "a propaganda against return of race gambling in California"—these persons chosen without reference to political or church affiliations.

2. A publicity expert is secured who, for the coming eight weeks, will keep this matter before the people of California through two hundred and fifty of the leading daily and weekly papers of the state.

3. Matter will be sent to two thousand pastors, from time to time, and they are asked to make weekly mention of some phase of the case, in pulpit and church bulletins; and finally—

4. A campaign, state-wide, in all towns and cities, by men and women who, before great mass-meetings, can arouse public sentiment against this great evil that is outlawed by so many of our states.

Of course we expect the editors of church papers to take a strong and leading part in this campaign, quoting from the "expert matter" mentioned in papers of the state, announcing mass-meetings, and writing editorials on same.

A long, strong pull, and a pull all together, will save the day, but nothing less than this is worthy of us, and of such a cause.

J. E. SQUIRES,

Secretary International Reform Bureau.

— ★ ★ —

## Remove the Stones of Stumbling

O MY dear friends, you who are letting miserable misunderstandings run on from year to year, meaning to clear them up some day; you who are keeping wretched quarrels alive because you can not quite make up your

mind that now is the day to sacrifice your pride, and kill them; you who are passing men sullenly upon the street, not speaking to them, out of some silly spite, and yet knowing that it would fill you with shame and remorse if you heard that one of those men were dead, to-morrow morning; you who are letting your neighbor starve, till you hear that he is dying of starvation; or letting your friend's heart ache for a word of appreciation or sympathy, which you mean to give him some day,—if you only could know and see and feel, all of a sudden, that "the time is short," how it would break the spell! How you would go instantly and do the thing which you might never have another chance to do!—*Phillips Brooks*.

— ★ ★ —

## Christ Strengthening Us

WE are ever ready to confide in weak friends, but we are afraid to trust in God. We believe the promises of the world, but we can not believe the Word of God. Let us make an effort to restore the divine order; let us confide with moderation in what depends upon ourselves, but let us set no bounds to our confidence in God. Let us repress all eagerness, all inquietude, all that we call zeal. He who thus trusts in God, becomes immovable as Mount Zion. Our trust should be more firm and elevated. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."—*Fenelon*.

— ★ ★ —

A SPANISH proverb says, "The devil tempts every man, but an idle man tempts the devil."

# Our Bible Reading

## Christ and the Sabbath

1. What important statement did Christ make concerning the Sabbath?

"And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: so that the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2: 27, 28.

2. What was the custom of Christ concerning the Sabbath?

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and He entered, as His custom was, into the synagog on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read." Luke 4: 16.

3. In foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, which was not to occur until nearly forty years after His death, how does Christ show His regard for the Sabbath in the Christian dispensation?

"When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place [“when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies,” Luke 21: 20, in describing the same thing] (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains: let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. . . . And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a Sabbath." Matt. 24: 15-20.

4. Does Christ in any instance give a single hint that He or His Father would change the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week?

Answer: He nowhere even hints at such a thing. But in the foregoing text from Matthew He plainly shows that He had a solicitous regard for the seventh-day Sabbath in the New Testament dispensation, by asking His disciples from that day and forward to continue to pray that when Jerusalem should be destroyed their flight from the besieged city would not be on the Sabbath day. If Christ had changed the Sabbath, as so many insist that He did, one would naturally expect Him to mention such a change in a connection of this kind.

5. Does Christ lay claim anywhere to being Lord of any particular day?

"The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2: 28. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, and the holy of Jehovah honorable; and shalt honor it, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah; and I will make thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." Isa. 58: 13, 14.

NOTE.—It should be clear that the day should be called "the Lord's day," of which Christ Himself says He is Lord, and which Jehovah distinctly says is "My holy day."





# THE OUTLOOK

"Watchman,  
what of  
the night?"

## The Long Record Broken

### Congress Enacts a Law Closing Post-Offices on Sunday

From Our Washington Correspondent

**S**ATURDAY, August 24, 1912, near the close of its recent session, Congress reversed its long record of over one hundred years, and enacted a law prohibiting the opening of first- and second-class post-offices on Sunday. The law, which was agreed to by the conference report and approved by the President on this day, reads:

"That hereafter post-offices of the first and second classes shall not be open on Sundays for the purpose of delivering mail to the general public, but this provision shall not prevent the prompt delivery of special delivery mail."

#### Movement Began in 1811

The agitation for the closing of the mails in the United States on Sunday began in 1811, and, as the records show, was of distinctly religious origin and character. The earliest mention of this agitation in Congress appears to be the following from the record of the proceedings of Friday, January 4, 1811:

"Mr. Findley presented a petition from the Synod of Pittsburgh, in the State of Pennsylvania, praying that the laws and regulations for the government of the Post-office Establishment may be so altered or amended as to prohibit mail-stages and post-riders from traveling, and post-offices being kept open, on Sunday."—*Annals of Congress*, page 487.

Friday, January 25, 1811, a petition from "sundry inhabitants of Philadelphia" was likewise presented, in which Congress was asked to amend the postal laws so as to "prohibit the delivery of letters, papers, and packets on the first day of the week, commonly called the Lord's day," upon the ground that the handling of the mails on Sunday had "a tendency to justify every species of breach of the laws made for the strict observance of the first day of the week, as set apart by the command of God for His more immediate service."

It requires no astute mind to discover the character and object of such petitions. They were religious and for religious ends upon the face of them.

#### Congress Refused to Act

January 3, 1812, the committee in the House on post-offices and post-roads presented a report on these and other like petitions, refusing to recommend "any alterations in the law regulating the Post-office Establishment," and closing with the following significant suggestion:

"Resolved, That the petitioners have leave to withdraw their petitions."

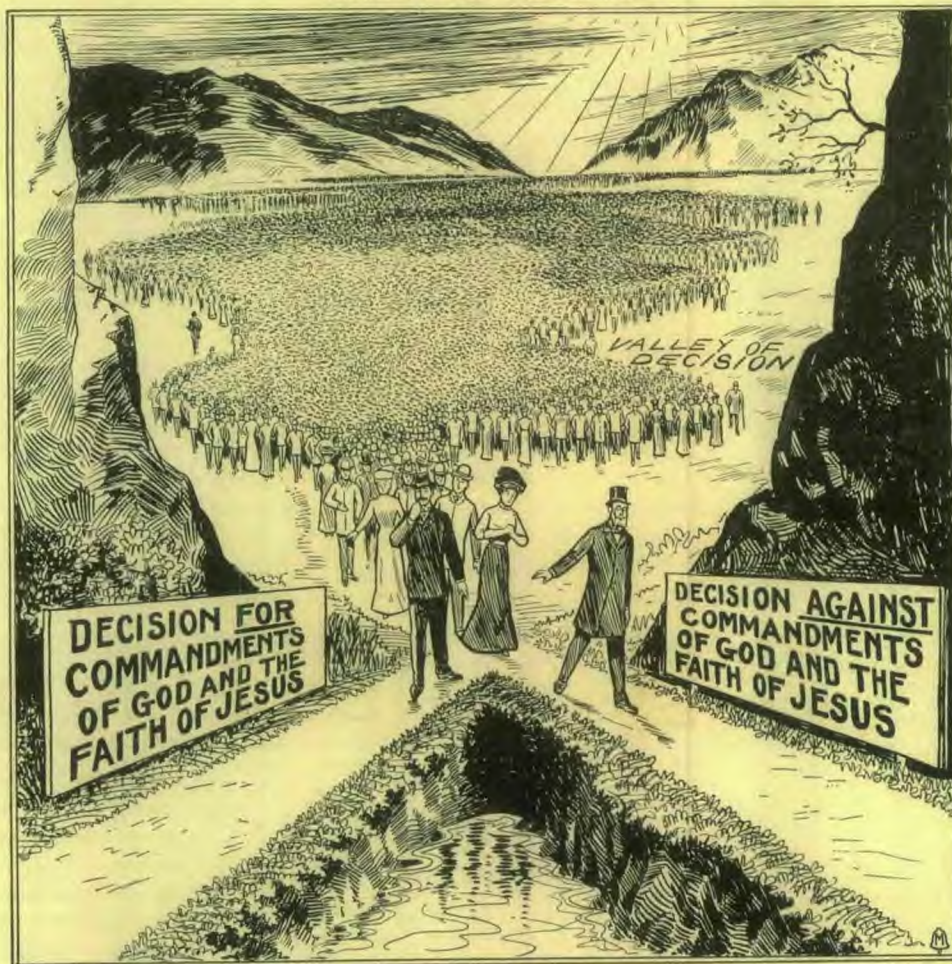
And the record says, "The resolution was concurred in."

This was in 1812, and was the first of a series of adverse reports adopted by Congress upon this subject.

#### The Agitation Renewed in 1815

After the close of the war of 1812, the agitation for the closing of the mails by law on

#### CLOSE OF THE GOSPEL AGE



"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision."

Sunday broke out again in 1815; but Congress once more refused to act, and through the adoption of another report upon the subject, declared it inexpedient to "pass any laws on the subject-matter of the petitions" which had been sent in.

#### The Great Agitation of 1828-1830

Then came the great agitation of 1828-1830, in which Congress was besieged with hundreds of petitions sent in by religious bodies from more than twenty states, and which called forth those masterly famous Sunday Mail Reports presented by Col. Richard M. Johnson, and adopted by Congress (the Senate in 1829, and the House in 1830), the sound, cogent, and convincing arguments of which not only put the matter to rest for many years, but drew forth from various state legislatures and numerous bodies of citizens throughout the country expressions of highest approval. As a sample of the latter, the following from a memorial to Congress in 1831, from citizens of Windham County, Vermont, may be cited:

"Your memorialists consider the proposed law as

inconsistent with those principles, and a clear deviation from the established course of government which reason dictates, and the experience of more than fifty years has sanctioned by the happiest results. They are not, indeed, insensible of the many artful pretexts by which the petitioners have endeavored to conceal their object, for the purpose of escaping from the odium which would justly attach to any request for the legal confirmation of a religious tenet. And while your memorialists condemn the pious fraud which would deceive and mislead the public mind in order to aggrandize a sect, they do not fail to recognize in that fraud a reluctant tribute to the truth of those principles for which they are contending. But, stripped of the disguise

in which it is enveloped, and reduced to a plain and intelligible proposition, the request of the petitioners amounts, in the opinion of your memorialists, to nothing less than a prayer to your honorable bodies to incorporate a sectarian dogma into the statutes of the land."—*American State Papers*, pages 305, 306.

Both reports adopted by Congress as the result of this wide-spread agitation, opposed the legislation called for, upon the ground that it would be religious legislation, and therefore unconstitutional; that it would establish a dangerous precedent; and that it would constitute "a legislative decision of a religious controversy, in which even Christians themselves are at issue." The Senate report said:

"Our government is a civil, and not a religious institution. . . . Should Congress in legislative capacity adopt the sentiment, it would establish the principle that the legislature is a proper tribunal to determine what are the laws of God. It would involve a legislative decision on a religious controversy, and on a point in which good citizens

may honestly differ in opinion, without disturbing the peace of society or endangering its liberties. If this principle is once introduced, it will be impossible to define its bounds."—*Ibid.*, page 237.

#### The Law Unnecessary

The same report further said:

"Congress has never legislated upon the subject. It rests, as it ever has done, in the legal discretion of the postmaster-general, under the repeated refusals of Congress to discontinue the sabbath mails."—*Ibid.*, page 240.

This, and the fact that under the supervision of the Post-office Department, Sunday work has already recently been curtailed and eliminated to a considerable extent WITHOUT LEGISLATION ON THE PART OF CONGRESS, is proof that no such legislation was needed, not even for the accomplishment of the alleged object for which it was passed, — the giving of rest to post-office employees.

#### For Religious Reasons

That this legislation has been called for all along for religious reasons is susceptible of



the clearest proof. At the hearing on the Blair National Sunday Rest Bill before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, December 13, 1888, the Rev. W. F. Crafts, its chief agitator and supporter, speaking against the existing postal law, said:

"The law allows the post-office to be kept open through the church hours, unless the first mail of the day comes during those hours. If it comes five minutes or more before the church service begins, the post-office can run, and is run, in many cases, all through church hours, as the rival and antagonist and the competitor of the churches. . . . A law forbidding the opening the United States post-offices during the usual hours of public worship would remedy this difficulty, and would be better than nothing; but we desire more than this. The law should also take from the local postmaster the power to keep his employees at work at such hours as would prevent them from going to church."—*50th Congress, 2d Session, Senate Mis. Doc. No. 43, page 6.*

The reasons given here why such legislation was desired are too plain to need comment. Church attendance stands out in bold relief.

The Hon. James R. Mann, minority leader of the House, and author of the measure just passed by Congress, seemed conscious of its religious character, and in his argument favoring its passage, he feebly sought for a moment to disentangle it from such connection. He said:

"For years I have declined to receive or open mail on Sunday, *not from a religious standpoint*, but because I thought there was one day in the week when I was entitled to be free from any requests coming through the mail."

But the fact that during the past hundred years this very legislation has persistently been urged upon Congress by the churches and by such religious organizations as the National Reform Association, the International Reform Bureau, and the Lord's Day Alliance, "from a religious standpoint," is too patent for any successful denial now of the fact that the legislation itself is religious.

Not Recommended by the Post-Office Department

Announcing the passage of this law, an article in the Washington "Post" of August 27, 1912, contained the following:

"It was said last night by post-office officials that this provision was not recommended by Mr. Hitchcock, postmaster-general, but was tacked onto the bill [the annual post-office appropriation bill] in the House and escaped notice in the Senate. It likewise seemed to escape notice in the Post-office Department until the bill had been passed. . . . Mr. Hitchcock has never supported the idea of suspending Sunday work altogether, as it has always been manifestly necessary to keep mail moving in the country, necessitating the despatching of trains, assorting, and making connections so that the flow of mail *en route* would not be delayed."

And, as reported in the same paper the next day, Mr. Hitchcock himself said:

"The department was not prepared to recommend the wholesale cessation of Sunday work. The truth of the matter is that I have been giving so much of my time and attention to the development of the 'parcel-post' portion of the recent post-office act that I have overlooked the other questions."

#### Little Opposition Before Passage

Few seemed to know of the existence of the measure while it was pending; and of those who did know, few seemed to realize what its passage would mean. There was no general stir made over it throughout the country, as in 1829 and 1830, and no one aroused in either house of Congress to make earnest protest against it as was done then. Both country and Congress were caught napping. Commenting upon this, the Philadelphia "Public Ledger" of August 28, 1912, says:

"The author of the provision is Representative James R. Mann, of Illinois, minority leader of the House, and the prohibition, which has been in the post-office appropriation act since the middle of last April, in full view of everybody who cared to read the bill, attracted no attention until yesterday, when it was announced that, beginning Sunday, the Sunday-closing provision, which is mandatory, would be put into effect."

A few resolutions from the Washington Secular League, and one or two other communications addressed to the Senate, it seems were about the only protests made against the measure. It thus appears that there was very little opposition to it prior to its passage, and that it came as a surprise even to the post-office authorities, and "like a bolt from the blue" to the country at large. Previously, when measures of this kind, involving the question of religious legislation and the union of church and state, have been before Congress, petitions have been circulated against them, mass-meetings held, articles written for the public press, and friends of religious freedom set to watch them to the very hour of adjournment; but in this case it seems that little attention was given to the measure, and as a



Emory R. Buckner, the young assistant district attorney who has been secured to assist in the prosecution of the grafting policemen in New York City. The corruption in the police force of New York seemed in a fair way to be the center of attraction, but the same thing has broken out in so many other cities that New York can only be one of a number. The league that is formed by so large a part of the police force, and in so many different cities, is a constantly growing menace. Some men will persist in telling us that things are getting better all the time. But the text of God's Word which tells us that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived," unquestionably has the right of it. It is well to have our theories in harmony with the good old Book if we want to be sure of their being right.

consequence, it was slipped through, with little or no public opposition, near the very close of the session.

#### The Postmaster-General's Liberal Construction of the Law

As soon as the fact of the passage of the law became generally known, the whole country was aroused, and many protests began to be made against it. The meaning of the law seemed plain. Henceforth, it said, post-offices of the first and second classes "shall not be open on Sundays for the purpose of delivering mail to the general public." To any ordinary mind this would mean the closing of the post-offices named on Sunday; and such seemed to be the general understanding of the intent of the measure as it came from the halls of Congress. The papers announced its passage under such headings as, "Stops Sunday Mail;" "Sunday Delivery of Mail Stopped;" "New

Ruling Prohibits Delivery Even from Lock Boxes;" "Mail on Order Only."

But so general, so immediate, and so loud began to be the protest against the measure, that the kind-hearted postmaster-general at once began to put a very liberal construction upon it. Under the caption, "Just a Little Mail—Hitchcock Decides to Permit Partial Delivery on Sunday Through Lock Boxes," the Washington "Post" of August 28 reported this official as saying:

"This provision does not require the closing of post-offices on Sundays, which would be quite impossible, owing to the fact that the transit mail has to be sorted and also the mail collected in cities for despatch to other destinations. To stop the movement of this mail would mean a serious clogging of the whole system of mail transportation, and consequent inconvenience to the public. . . . In short, the only mail that will be affected under a reasonable construction of the new law is that received at the post-offices on Sunday and hitherto sorted on that day for distribution to lock boxes. . . . The work of distributing Sunday mail to lock boxes will be limited to certain classes of mail that can not be held until Monday morning without serious inconvenience to the addressees. This mail will include that for newspapers and hotel guests."

Mr. Mann, the author of the measure, after conference with the postal authorities, came to the rescue, and said:

"There was no intent upon the part of Congress so to restrict the activities of the Post-office Department as to inconvenience seriously the business public. It is absurd for anybody to assume that Congress meant to close post-offices as tight as a wedge on Sunday."—*Washington "Post," August 28, 1912.*

#### What Then Has Been Accomplished?

The public, under this "liberal construction" of the law, having been assured that matters in the Post-office Department were to go on very much the same as usual, the agitation over the question has very naturally quite materially subsided from its first violent outburst. What, therefore, has been accomplished by the passage of this Sunday-mail closing law?—This, and chiefly this: Congress has now, and in a new way, been committed to Sunday legislation. Its long record in refusing to enact such a law has been broken. Altho the law is only a small item tacked onto a piece of annual legislation, it establishes a precedent for all time to come. "Nothing that the Congress just ended has done or left undone," says the Washington "Herald," "has turned back the dial of progress more" than this. The act is "class legislation in more than one respect," it adds, and "oppression of the people by paid servants of the people." And what is still worse, it is not at all likely that the misstep will be retraced.

This law was not a mere proviso attached to the post-office appropriation bill, making the appropriation conditional upon the closing of post-offices on Sunday, as in the case of appropriations made by Congress in the past to certain expositions. The government would not strike a bargain thus in dealing with its own institutions. The legislation is mandatory. It says that the post-offices named "shall not be open on Sundays" for the delivery of mail to the general public. It is the very legislation so strongly inveighed against in the Sunday Mail Reports adopted by Congress eighty years ago, and in which those who framed these reports saw all the evils of the union of church and state and the pernicious principles which had wrought "the catastrophe of other nations." In this, not an individual, but a government institution employing individuals, is compelled by law to respect and observe Sunday.

W. A. COLCORD.

Washington, D. C.



# HOME AND FIRESIDE

## A Mother to Her Son

Upon Discovering that He Smoked

By Delwin Rees Buckner

Last night, as I lay longing for the dawn,  
My window wide to scent the lilac's bloom  
And let the mocking-bird dispel my gloom,  
Almost as fast as flees a frightened fawn,  
A stooping shadow shot across the lawn,  
Lit by a spark that trailed a sickening  
fume.

Heart-sad, I hastened to thy cozy room;  
But, lo—I bleed to say it—thou wast gone!  
Within my bosom waves of sorrow roll.

My son, thy joys I feel, thy griefs as  
well;

But O, they torture like a gouging  
knife—

Thy sins against the temple of thy soul.  
God breathed within thy nostrils breath  
of life;

My boy, wouldst thou exhale smoke  
wreaths of hell?

— \* \* —

## Gossip

By Kathrina B. Wilcox



HE subject of gossip is one which confronts us on every side, and is one to which we as young people should be awake, for we can not afford to let this treacherous and insidious foe blight our characters and contaminate our minds.

For the benefit of our young people, the subject may be divided into the following questions:

*Should a young person gossip?*

*Is there such a thing as "harmless gossip"?*

*Should we listen to gossip or pass it on to others? and why not?*

*What should we do when some one starts to tell us a choice bit of gossip?*

The first question, *Should a young person gossip?* is most quickly and easily answered by a very emphatic No. But to answer the question somewhat less briefly, we would say, A young person should not gossip, neither should an older person gossip, neither should a child gossip. But most emphatically during the habit-forming period of life persons should not gossip. Our characters are largely made up by the habits formed, and it is easy to form habits in youth that cling to us all through life. Therefore is it not important that we, as young people right in the prime of young manhood and womanhood, look carefully into this matter at once, and ask ourselves if such indulgence ever pays?

It does not pay, commercially, socially, diplomatically, or spiritually.

It does not pay commercially, for a tale-bearer, a tattler, would be injurious to any kind of business. It does not pay socially, for as Solomon wisely says, "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends." Prov. 17:9. We have all perhaps experienced this in our own social lives.

It does not pay from a diplomatic standpoint. For policy's sake it is well to heed the apostle's injunction, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

And most of all, it does not pay spiritually. We are admonished to "edify one another." Gossip, instead of edifying, build-

ing up, is tearing down. If we think on those things that are lovely and pure and true and of good report, we will not have any room or any time for thoughts of gossip. We will see in our fellow men only the good and the possibilities for good, and will endeavor to help them develop instead of tearing down their reputations.

Second, *Is there any such thing as harmless gossip?* We might answer this question by asking another: Is there any such thing as harmless sin? Let us go back to the Standard Dictionary definition of gossip: "Idle or familiar talk, groundless rumor, tattle, as friend with friend, especially scandalous, half-confidential, usually ill-founded personal remarks about, or criticism of, others." Does not this answer itself? Of course not all news is gossip, as you already know. Gossip is something that tears down. Is anything that tears down the reputation of another harmless?

Third, *Should we listen to gossip or pass it on to others?* Suppose that Miss A should tell Miss B something detrimental to the character of Mr. C, and Miss B should listen. Now if she kept that bit of gossip to herself, what effect would it have on her mind?—Every time she saw Mr. C she would think of the report she had heard, and her estimation of him might never be the same again.

If she did not keep it to herself, it would not only poison her own mind, but the mind of some one else; and through that one, the mind of another; and so it would spread.

And one other point right here: Miss A might injure the reputation of Mr. C, but she could not injure his character, while if she persisted in such a course, she would ruin her own character as well as her reputation.

James Parker said: "Never throw mud. You may miss the mark, but you will have dirty hands."

Another: "The man recovered from the bite. The dog died."

Of course you understand that there is quite a fine distinction between character and reputation. Our reputation is what people think we are, and our character is what we really are. If our reputation is injured, we may in time win our way back into the hearts of the people, but it will take years to rebuild our character. Therefore I would like to have you grasp that thought: The reputation of the one who gossips is injured, because I would think that, if he talked to me about you, he would talk about me to some one else; and more, his whole character is undermined. The love of truth, the keen insight into the good qualities of his fellow men, is demoralized, and in time he fails to see the good in others.

Fourth, *What should we do when some one starts to tell us a choice bit of gossip?* Now we are brought face to face with a problem that each one of us will have to study out and decide for himself. I can only suggest how we may meet it. It takes real moral courage, when a friend comes to you with some choice bit of information regarding some individual, and tells you not to tell (he would never tell any one else but you, of course), to tell him kindly, but firmly

and frankly, that if it is something which will cause you to think less of some one, you would prefer not to hear it. Or, if the information is out before you are aware of its nature, you might turn the trend of thought by saying something kind or commendable about the person under discussion. This will be a gentle rebuke to the informer, and cause the tale to lose much of its inspiration.

Then, be sure to set an example by never repeating these "choice bits of gossip" yourself. A little verse recently found gives us some excellent rules on this point:

"If you are tempted to reveal  
A tale some one to you has told  
About another, make it pass,  
Before you speak, three gates of gold.

"These narrow gates—first 'Is it true?'  
Then 'Is it needful' in your mind?  
Give honest answer; and the next  
Is last and narrowest, 'Is it kind?'"

"And if to reach your lips at last  
It passes through these gateways three,  
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear  
What the result of speech may be."

Don't think that if we make a resolution at this time never again to gossip, we will not often be tempted, but as that little verse says:

"If you your lips  
Would keep from slips,  
Five things observe with care:  
Of whom you speak,  
To whom you speak,  
And why, and when, and where."

Let us supplement these few thoughts with something far superior from the Word of God, which leaves us little room for question in regard to this important subject:

*What does the ninth commandment forbid?*

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Ex. 20:16.

*How is a man regarded who obeys this command?*

"If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." James 3:2.

*To what double use is the tongue put?*

"Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." James 3:10.

*Can man, unrenewed by grace, control his tongue?*

"For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." James 3:7, 8.

*What does Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, call people who do not control their speech?*

"For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies." 2 Thess. 3:11.

*How does he speak of this class of people in his letter to Timothy?*

"And withal they learn also to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." 1 Tim. 5:13.

*Of what are one's words the index?*



"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matt. 12:34.

*What will our words have to do with our standing in the judgment?*

"For by thy words thou shalt be justified, Matt. 12:37.

*Among what class of people does Peter place "busybodies"?*

"Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler [busybody] in other men's matters." 1 Peter 4:15.

*What special sin is covered by the ninth commandment?*

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor." Lev. 19:16.

*What are the words of a talebearer like?*

"The words of a talebearer are as wounds." Prov. 26:22.

*What is their effect?*

"He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends." Prov. 17:9.

*What would follow if each attended to his own affairs only?*

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." Prov. 26:20.

*To what is a word fitly spoken compared?*

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. 25:11.

*To whom are our words all known?*

"For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." Ps. 139:4.

Now if we, as a strong army of young people, would resolve together that we will put down this evil in our midst, it could be far more easily and more effectually accomplished. To illustrate: If I should resolve not to gossip, and Miss S should resolve not to gossip, and she should forget and start to

tell me some bit of information, and I should ask, "Miss S, is it true?" she would immediately remember, and not take offense; while if I alone had made the resolution, and she knew nothing about it, she might think me stiff or overcritical.

You can all readily see how we could unitedly accomplish this much more easily than separately, for "in union there is strength." Shall we not begin at once?

— ★ —

## A Good Deed

"WHERESOEVER this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." Matt. 26:13. We find suggested here the fragrance of a good deed of love. Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached, the story of this woman of Bethany will be told for a memorial of her. The house was filled with the odor of the ointment; but the larger house of history has been filled with the same fragrance, and will continue to be pervaded by it to the end. There is immortality in acts as well as in actors.—A. T. Pierson.

— ★ —

## The Influence of a Torn Tract

Thus far this year 91,560 gospel and health tracts have been supplied in the popular Dollar Package form. Have you had a part in their circulation? These are days when the Spirit of God is striving with men and women, and turning them to the study of the Word. Through the influence of a single tract or leaflet, many have, during the past summer, been led to search the Scriptures, and many more are waiting to have their minds aroused in a similar way. What a wave of influence may be set in motion by the giving out of a tract! The following words from a gentleman who prizes a few torn pages is an illustration:

"I have been reading some old worn out and torn up tracts of yours, and there is something about them

that makes me feel hungry and thirsting for something different from what I have been taught, and I am now over fifty years old. . . . I wish you would send me samples of other publications and price-lists, and help me to become of some service in the Master's cause." (Letter to Pacific Press Publishing Association, dated July 28, 1912.)

There is a growing interest, on the part of Christian laymen and workers, in tract circulation. In a recent camp-meeting missionary service, those present purchased fifty-five of the large Five Dollar Packages of tracts, and ninety of the Dollar Packages. The large packages were for tent company and church use, and the Dollar Packages were taken by individuals and families. This is an indication of the way in which a liberal sowing of the seeds of truth is being planned for everywhere. The 20,000 copies of "Like the Leaves of Autumn," the booklet of instruction in tract work, have been used, and another edition is on the press. This help is free on request.

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Establishing God's Kingdom by Law;  
Looking to the State for Morality;  
God's Religious Liberty Example;  
Putting the Church over the State in Ecuador;  
American Principles in the Balance;  
Religious Liberty in Puritan Times;  
Absurdity of Proposed California Sunday Law;  
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PUBLISHED WEEKLY

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L. A. Reed

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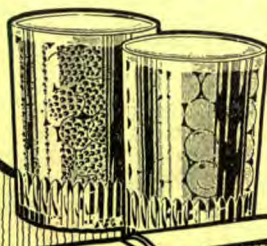
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# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CAL., SEPTEMBER 24, 1912

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For further particulars, subscription rates, etc., see page 15.

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Pastor M. C. Wilcox, our senior editor, is still in the East, attending general meetings. He has attended camp-meetings at Kokomo, Indiana; Bay City, Michigan; Washington, Pennsylvania; and Utica, New York; also meeting with various churches in other parts of the latter state. He writes that many good meetings have been held. He has had charge of as many as five services a day, which has been quite wearing physically, but the Lord has greatly blessed. Many requests for prayer have been made, and God heard and answered. At the various revival services, many went forward and obtained a blessing. On several occasions nearly the whole congregation and the choir as a body pressed forward, and many victories were gained. At Utica the rain promised to break up the Sabbath meeting. An experience was related in which the Lord stayed the wind in answer to prayer at a distant camp-meeting; and the situation was laid upon Him whose "Peace, be still," is as efficacious as ever. The rain held off, and a blessed Sabbath day, rich with God's blessing, was experienced. In visiting the scenes of his former labors, he also writes that he meets some old friends, but misses many familiar faces, which makes him feel almost like "the last leaf on the tree in the spring." "But," he adds, "we will look to Him who is able to give more abundant life. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

On page 9 we have an important article on the subject of race-track gambling in California, by Pastor J. E. Squires, secretary for California of the International Reform Bureau. We have not been able to do very much work in common with this bureau in the past, for the reason that it has had itself so closely bound up with Sunday legislation that we could not conscientiously do it. But here is an issue on which we can heartily unite. It is to defeat a measure that is aiming to bring race

gambling back into California. So many of those who are working for laudable reforms and improvements seem persistent to mingle with these reforms some religious measures, like legislation compelling the observance of Sunday by civil law, that it is difficult to find anything on which we can unite. For while we would gladly work for the abolition of race-track gambling, and while we always do all in our power to eradicate the saloon, yet when it comes to working merely to close the saloon or to stop gambling on Sunday, we think that the plan is not only too narrow, but it is fundamentally wrong. We shall hope to keep this matter of the menace of the proposed race-track law before our readers, and we ask all to do all in their power to defeat it. Gambling that is "winked at" by the authorities and permitted to run contrary to law is certainly bad enough. But when it comes to having a law in California that will make certain forms of gambling a legal thing, it is so grossly wrong that every good man and woman should exert every influence at their command to defeat it.

As an act of heroism, and to show his loyal affection for the late emperor of Japan, the leading Japanese general and his wife, Count and Countess Nogi, committed suicide together on September 13. It is a great thing to have a religion and to live amid surroundings that deliver one from such destructive superstitions.

## In Our Next

Among the articles of special interest that will be in the paper next week will be an article by Mrs. E. G. White entitled,

"Try the Spirits." This article has some very helpful suggestions in dealing with skepticism and Spiritualism.

"Man's Condition in Death" is the theme of an article by Mrs. Stuttle. When man is dead, is he still conscious? This is always an interesting as well as important topic to study.

One of the editors will have an article on "Science and the Sabbath," and there will be another editorial on "The Sabbath and the Creator."

## The New National Sunday Law

ON page 10 will be found an exceedingly important article by our Washington correspondent, on the Sunday law that was rushed through the last Congress so quickly and so quietly that scarcely any one knew anything about it till the deed was done. The readers of this paper have been kept aware of the fact that one of the most striking prophecies of the Bible calls for a world-wide Sunday law right at the close of time, and this nation is to take the lead in creating the law. It is therefore with deep interest that we note everything of this kind as it comes up.

Many people regard the question of Sabbath observance as a matter of mere opinion. But God in His Word has taken the subject clear above the opinions of men. It is a question of His own specific law. His law says that the seventh day, commonly called Saturday, is the Sabbath, and nowhere in all His Word has He, or His Son, or any of His apostles or prophets, ever given the remotest hint that this Sabbath of divine appointment has ever been divinely changed.

But the Scriptures do plainly tell of the power that would think to change the times and laws of the most high God. And through this power we have the observance of Sunday brought into the world, and the great mass of the people have been led to believe that God and Christ authorized the change of the Sabbath. But such is not the case. God's holy Sabbath remains as the only day He has ever appointed, and the Sunday institution is its apostate rival. It may seem hard to believe this, but the study of the Bible will reveal that it is actually so.

## Memory Text for the Week

John 8:10, 11

"And Jesus lifted up Himself, and said unto her, Woman, where are they? did no man condemn thee? And she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from henceforth sin no more."

We would continue to call attention to the advertisement, on page 15, of the six religious liberty special issues of this paper. We still have a number of them on hand, and while they last they will be furnished at the prices named, but we are not planning to print any more. As suggested last week, our readers will find them a splendid document for reference, and to lend among their neighbors, to place in reading-rooms, and the like.

The National Irrigation Congress is to convene this year in Salt Lake City, Utah, September 30 to October 3. There is a wide-spread interest in the congress this year, because of the discussions that will take place on the subject of the water rights to the Rio Grande River. Texas is especially interested in this feature, and is preparing to send a whole train load of delegates. Colorado and other near-by states are also sending very large delegations.

The super-dreadnought battle-ship, the Pennsylvania, authorized by the last Congress, is to be the largest ever built. She is to cost \$15,000,000, and to have 30,000 tons displacement. Her length is to be 630 feet, and her beam 95 feet 2 5-8 inches. This is just about three times the displacement of the greatest battle-ships of fifteen years ago; and when the improvements in fighting power are considered, good naval authorities warrant us in saying that it is not far from 1,500 times as powerful. This will serve to give something of an idea of the terrible progress the nations are making in preparing for the great battle-field of Armageddon.

A very distinct earthquake shock was felt here and throughout Northern California on the morning of September 12. It is interesting and also a little curious to note how real estate men and others interested in various local affairs will try to keep accounts of storms and earthquakes out of the papers. But each section of the country is now coming to have its full share of disasters of some sort, and hence no locality has whereof to boast over another. And we will see that storms, earthquakes, and other violent phenomena of nature will continue to increase and to become more and more violent. And as we see these things coming on, we should not become terrified about it, but seek to know the meaning of it, and be ready for the event it portends.

Mexican rebels have been very active along the United States border during the last few days, and some American property has been destroyed and a number of Americans have lost their lives. A Southern Pacific passenger-train was destroyed in Mexico, and one bridge burned up, and a general threat was made that if the railroad company did not cease carrying supplies for the Madero government the rebels would destroy all the rest of their bridges and their property generally. A popular tumult in Mexico City stormed the Mexican Congress on September 14, shouting, "Death to Madero!" and "Long live Porfirio Diaz!" The demand was very urgent that Madero be dragged from his position, and that the aged Diaz be recalled from his retreat in Europe. Because of the conditions, which grow more and more threatening, the United States is under the necessity of concentrating large numbers of troops on the borders, ready for any emergency.